



...

YOU NEVER
CHANGE, DO YOU,
OAMA? YOU LET
YOUR TONGUE
WAG HOWEVER
IT WANTS...

BUT I WON'T
PLAY YOUR
GAME!



I'M
WILLING
TO WAIT
FOR YOU.



AS YOU
KNOW...
I ALWAYS
MAKE MY
DECISIONS
AFTER
CONSULTING
THE
BUDDHA.

AFTER WE MOVED THE
CAPITAL, I ORDERED
MONK HOSEN TO
BURN INCENSE, AND
HAD THE HUNT
OFFICIALLY
BLESSED BY
BUDDHA!!

THAT'S EVEN
WORSE, AS
FAR AS I'M
CONCERNED



EVERY
SECOND
WORD YOU
UTTER
THESE
DAYS IS
"BUDDHA"!

BUT PEOPLE
HAVE ALWAYS
WORSHIPED
THE NATIVE
GODS, NOT
ONLY IN OMI,
BUT IN THE
PROVINCES
TOO!

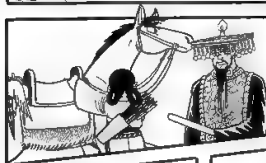
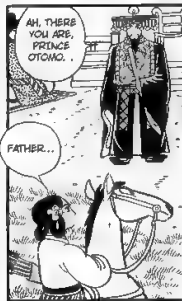
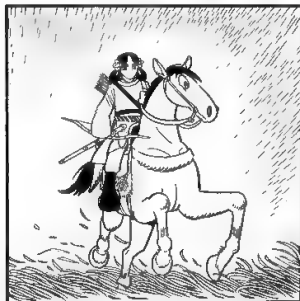


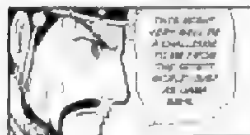
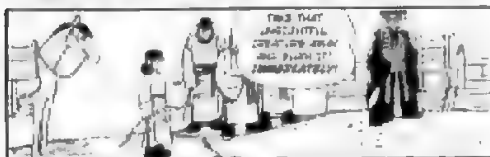
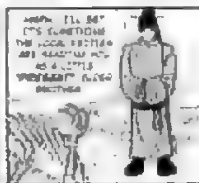
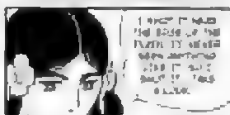
HOW CAN YOU
POSSIBLY CLAIM
TO BE JUSTIFYING
THE LAND, WHEN
YOU IGNORE THE
WILL OF THE
VILLAGERS? WHAT
KIND OF PEACE
WILL THAT BRING,
MAY I ASK?

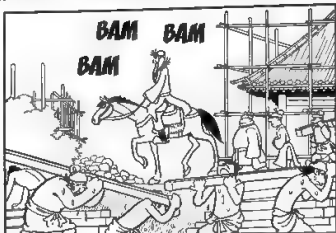
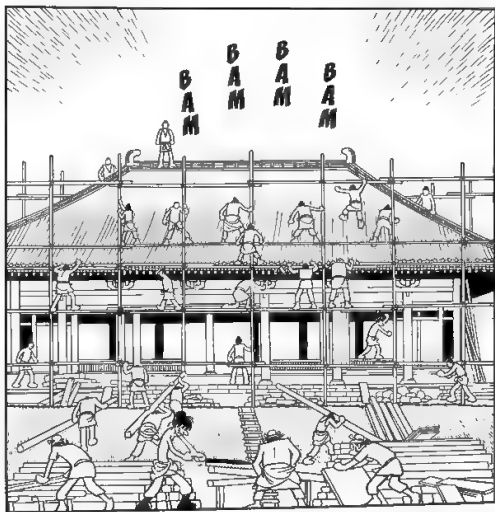


ENOUGH!
I WON'T
STAND FOR
THIS!

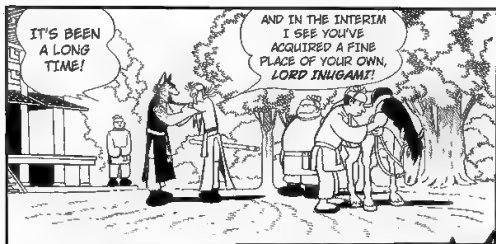


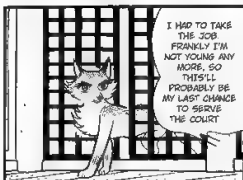
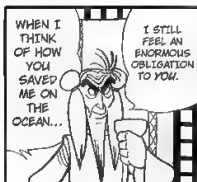




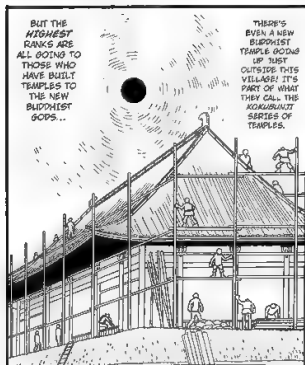
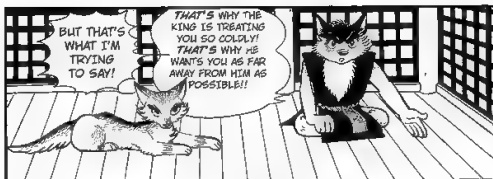














ALL THESE
TEMPLES ARE REALLY
GOVERNMENT
PROJECTS. THE
EMPEROR IS TRYING
TO SPREAD BUDDHISM
ANY WAY HE CAN.
AND THAT'S WHY YOU
ARE IN IMMINENT
DANGER, SIR.



NO NEED
TO WORRY
ABOUT
ME...



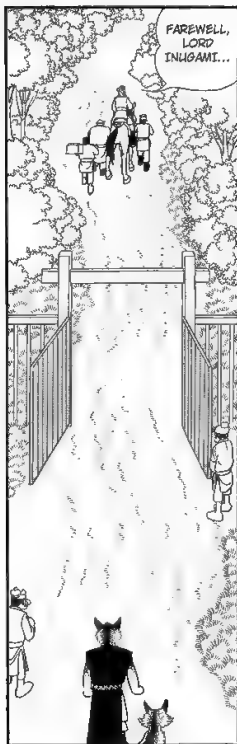
AFTER I'M
GONE, LORD
INUGAMI, IF
YOU RUN
INTO ANY
PROBLEMS...

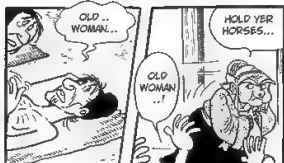
I RECOMMEND
YOU VISIT
PRINCE OAMA.
I'M SURE HE'LL
BE ABLE TO
HELP YOU.

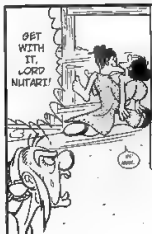
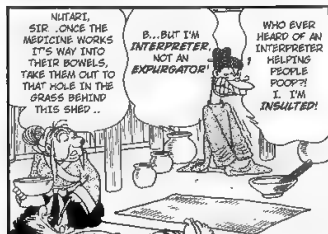


PLEASE,
BE CAREFUL,
SIR.

WE WILL NOT MEET
AGAIN, MY YOUNG
FRIEND. IT HAS
BEEN A TRULY
UNUSUAL AND
MARVELOUS
RELATIONSHIP.





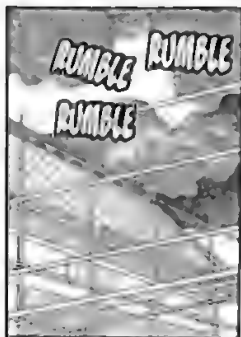


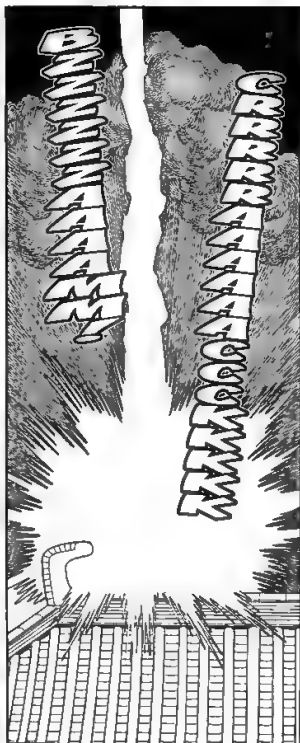
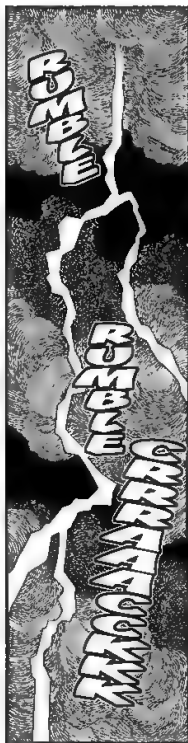


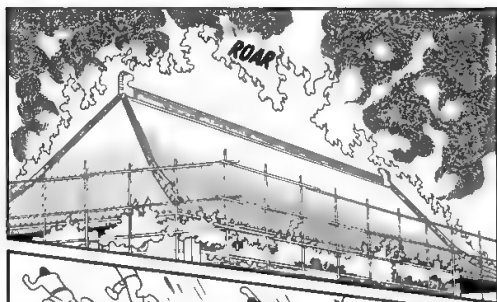












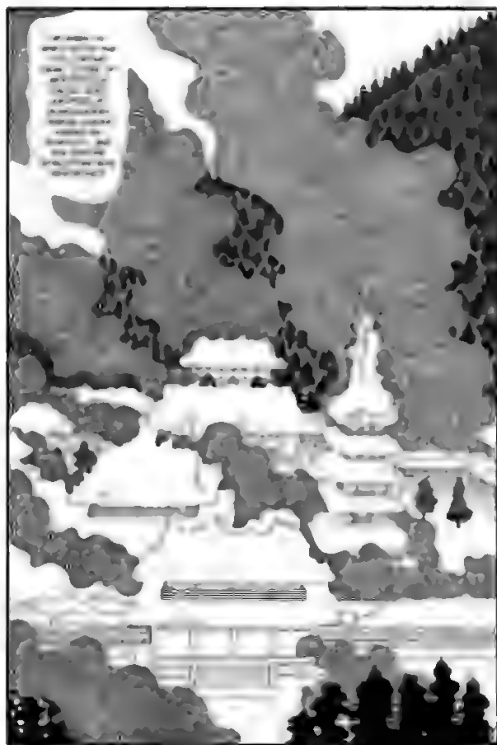


THAT YEAR
THERE WERE
LIGHTNING
STRIKES ALL
OVER YAMATO,
AND MANY
TEMPLES
BURNED.

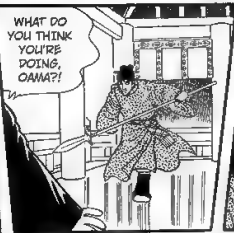
.. INCLUDING
MANY OF THE
KOKUBUNJI,
OR STATE-
SPONSORED
LOCAL TEMPLES...

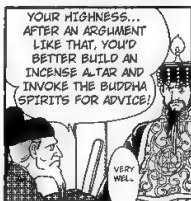


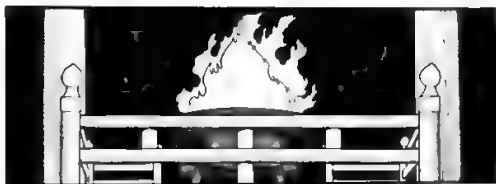
IN DECEMBER,
EVEN THE
TREASURE
HOUSE ON THE
PALACE
GROUNDS
BURST INTO
FLAME.





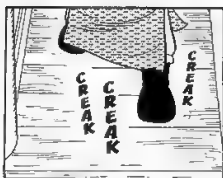
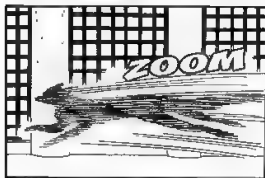
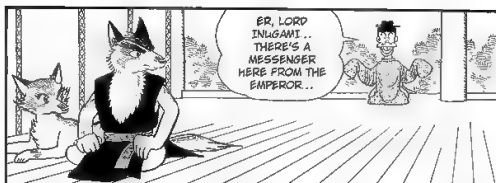


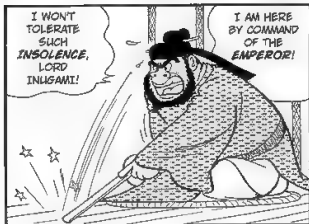
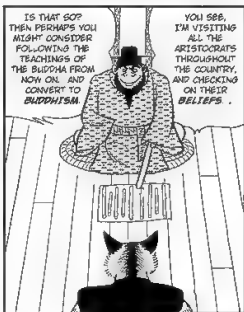
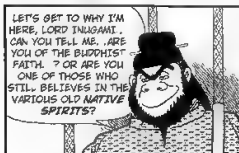
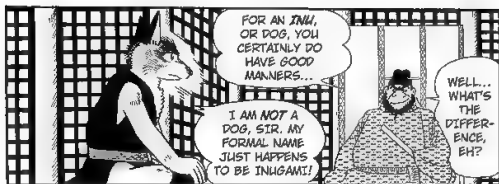


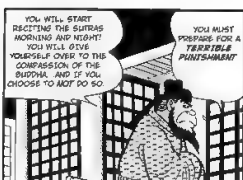




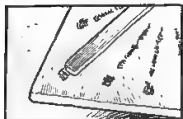
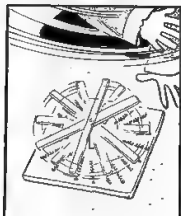
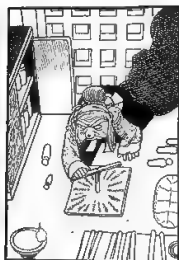
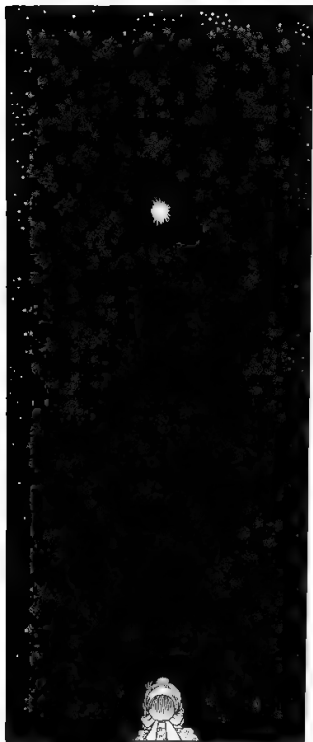
*NAMI SHAKA MU NI BUTSU

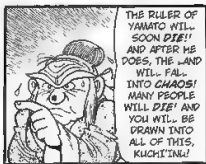
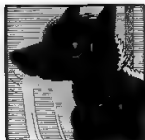


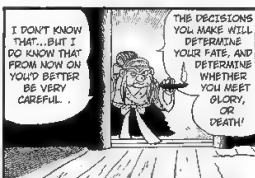






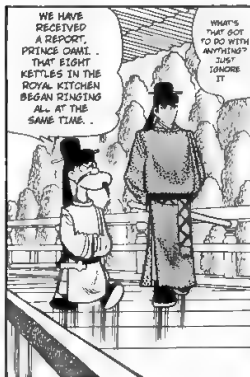




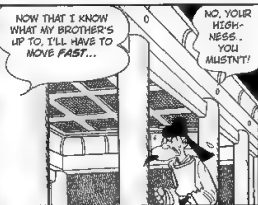
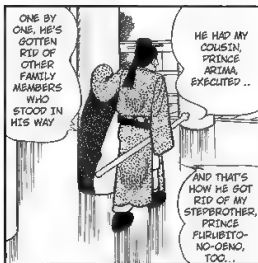
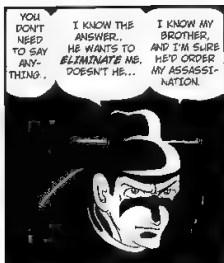




*KISHITUSHUSHIN WAS AN INTELLECTUAL AND SCHOLAR WHO HAD IMMIGRATED TO YAMATO FROM THE BAEKJE KINGDOM







THERE'S NO POINT
IN MAKING THINGS
ANY WORSE RIGHT
NOW...

PERHAPS THE SMART
THING FOR ME TO DO
NOW IS TO ALLAY MY
BROTHER'S FEARS BY
ACTUALLY SHAVING MY
HEAD AND BECOMING
A MONK.

I KNEW
YOU'D
THINK
OF
SOME-
THING.

AS A MONK,
YOU CAN
SHAVE YOUR
HEAD AND
STILL KEEP
YOUR SCALP!
HEH HEH.

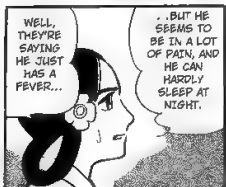
HELLO,
MOTHER.

THIS IS
NO TIME
FOR BAD
JOKES,
YASUWARO.

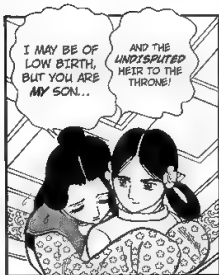
HMPH!
A
MONK!

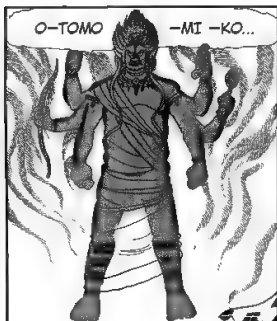
IT MAKES
ME SICK
JUST TO
THINK OF
SHAVING
MY HEAD!

WELL, IF IT
ISN'T MY DEAR SON,
PRINCE OTOMO.
AND HOW IS HIS
MAJESTY, YOUR
FATHER, FEELING
TODAY?









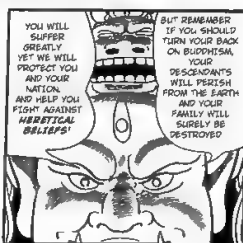


LISTEN WELL!



YOUR FATHER
...

...IS NOT LONG FOR THIS WORLD YOU MUST SUCCEED HIM, AND CONTINUE TO SPREAD BUDDHISM THROUGHOUT THE LAND!



YOU WILL SUFFER GREATLY YET WE WILL PROTECT YOU AND YOUR NATION AND HELP YOU FIGHT AGAINST HERETICAL BELIEFS!

BUT REMEMBER IF YOU SHOULD TURN YOUR BACK ON BUDDHISM, YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL PERISH FROM THE EARTH AND YOUR FAMILY WILL SURELY BE DESTROYED



I. I FOLLOW MY FATHER'S COMMAND. I HAVE ALREADY CONVERTED TO BUDDHISM.

I ALREADY CHANT THE SUTRAS MORNING AND NIGHT AND LIGHT CANDLES TO THE ONE HUNDRED BUDDHIST PIETIES



WE
KNOW

AND YOU
MUST
NOT
STOP!

NEVER
STOP!!



I WON'T! I
PROMISE!
I PROMISE!

PRINCE
OTOMO!



WHAT'S
THE
MATTER,
MY
SON?



DID YOU
HAVE A
BAD
DREAM?

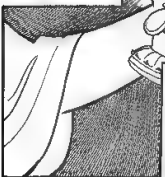
YES...
IT WAS
TERRI-
BLE!



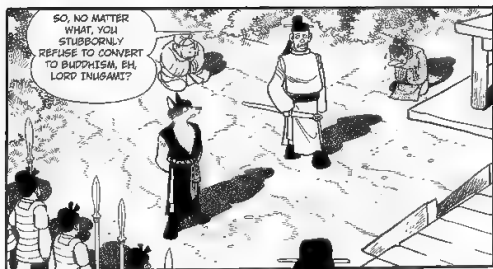
WHAT'S
THAT YOU
HAVE IN
YOUR
HAND?

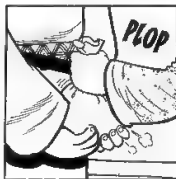
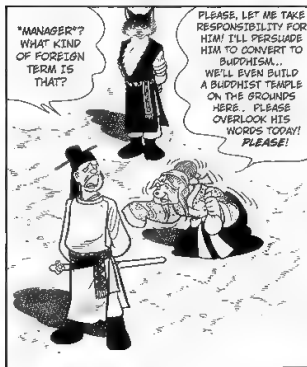


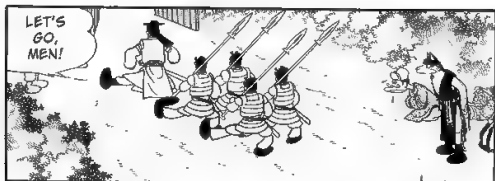
IT'S A STATUE OF
THE BUDDHA!!

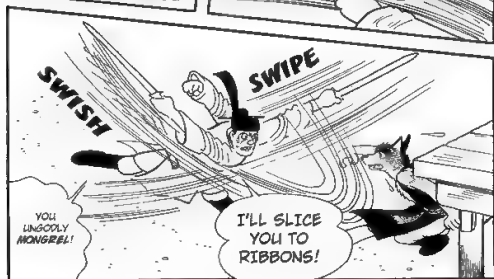
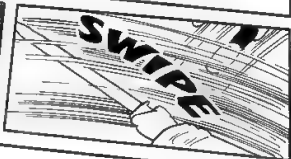
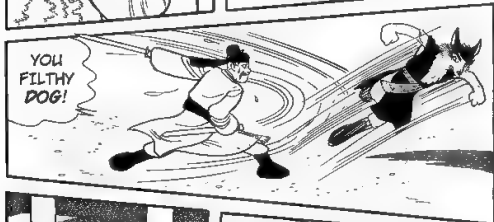


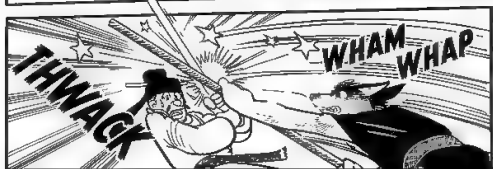
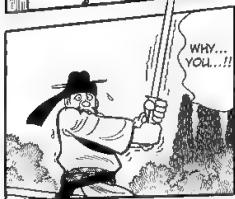
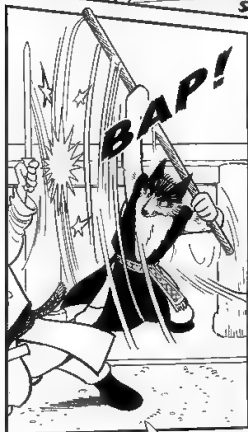
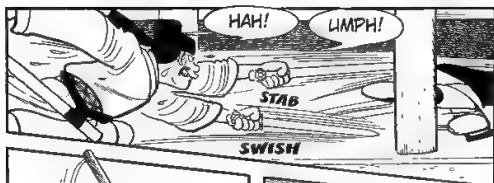
I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT...
THAT WAS
NO DREAM...
THE BUDDHA
WAS HERE...!

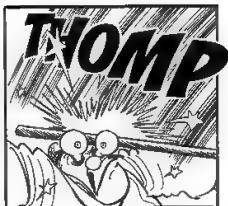




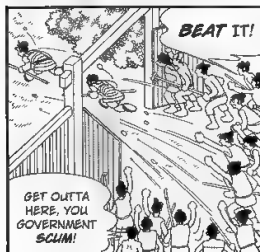


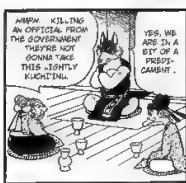
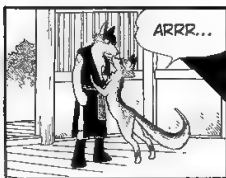






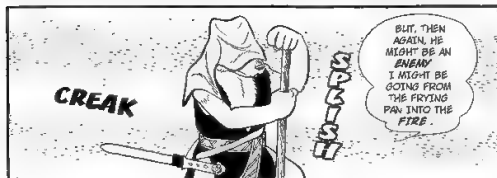




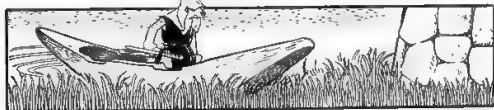




BUT THEN
AGAIN, HIS
ESTATE IS ON
THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE
LAKE IF YOU
CAN JUST GET
THERE, YOU
MIGHT BE
ABLE TO SEE
HIM!!

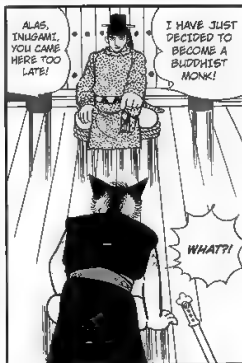
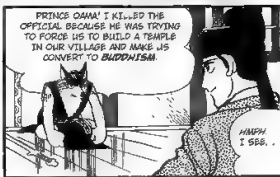














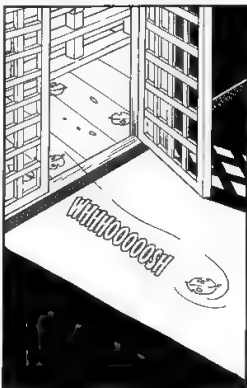
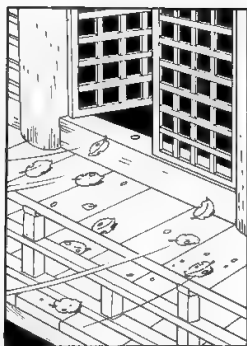
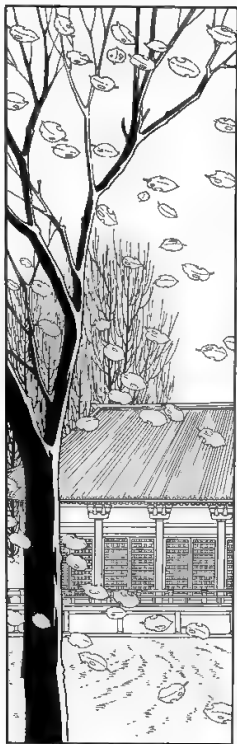
I'LL BE
RECITING
SUTRAS
EVERY DAY!
HEH HEH .

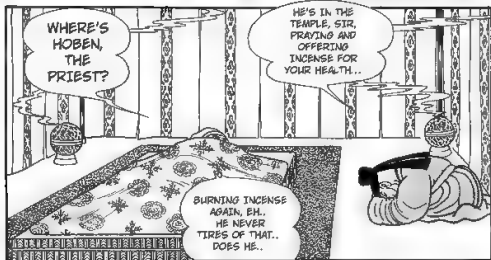
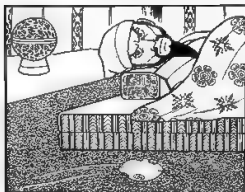


SO, THERE IS
NOTHING I
CAN DO TO
HELP YOU..

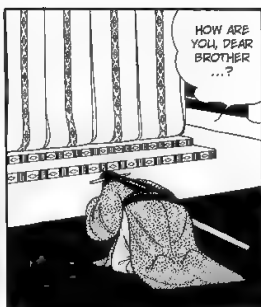
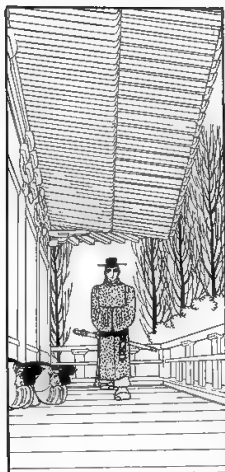
NOTHING...



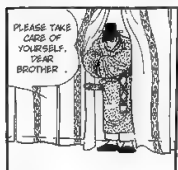


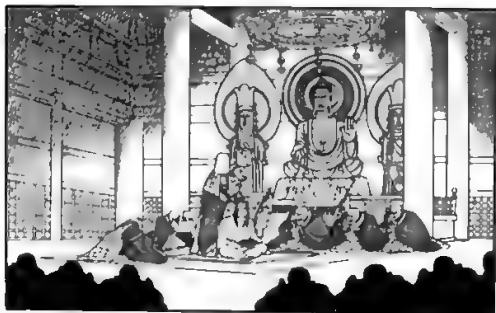




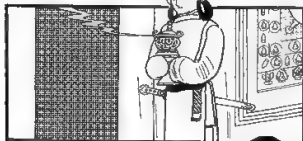
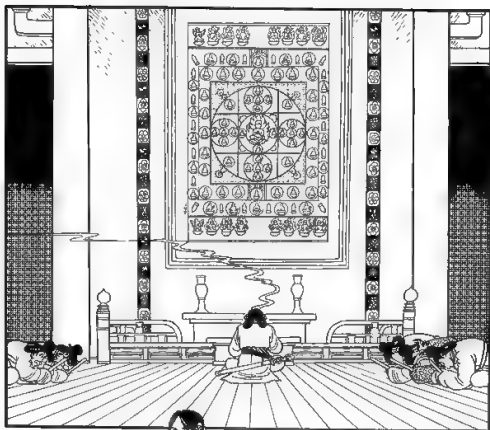








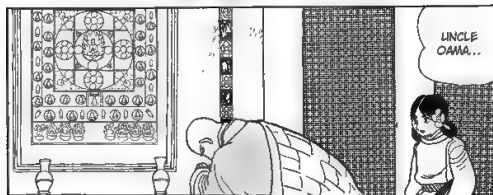




...WE SIX PEOPLE HERE TODAY WILL BE OF ONE HEART AS WE RULE THIS LAND! SHOULD ANY OF US BREAK OUR OATH, WE WILL SURELY FEEL THE PAIN OF THE BUDDHA'S PUNISHMENT.

THE FIVE OF US SWEAR TO ALWAYS CARRY OUT YOUR HIGHNESS' COMMANDS. SHOULD WE EVER BREAK OUR OATH, WE FULLY EXPECT TO INCUR THE WRATH OF ALL THE DEITIES IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, AND FOR OUR FAMILIES AND OUR DESCENDANTS TO BE EXTINGUISHED...

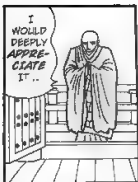








INUGAMI,
YOU SAY?
WELL, IF
YOU WISH
CLEMENCY
FOR HIM,
UNCLE
OAMA, I'LL
GRANT IT.



I
WOULD
DEEPLY
APPRE-
CIATE
IT..



YOU MUST
BE CAREFUL,
PRINCE
OTOMO ..



YOU MAY BE
HANDING RED
MEAT TO A
TIGER HERE...

BUT WHAT
SHOULD I HAVE
TO FEAR, SOGA
NO HATAYASHU?
UNCLE OAMA'S
ALREADY BECOME
PART OF THE
YOSHINO
TEMPLE.



BUT WHAT IF
PRINCE OAMA
BEGINS
PLOTTING IN
THE TEMPLE AT
YOSHINO.

AND THEN STARTS
INCITING THE
NOBLES ACROSS
THE LAND TO
REVOLT AGAINST
YOU? THEN WHAT
WILL YOU DO?



HATAYASHU!
IT ALMOST
SOUNDS AS
IF YOU
DON'T
TRUST
UNCLE
OAMA!

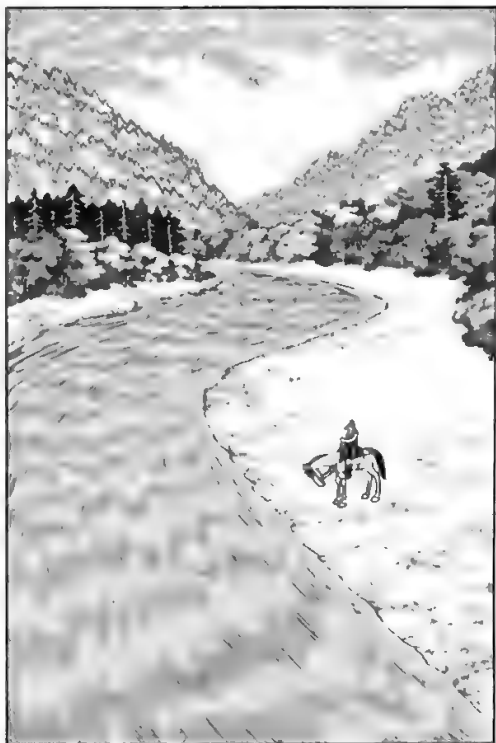
I DON'T
TRUST
HIM!



REMEMBER TO KEEP
THE YOSHINO TEMPLE
UNDER SURVEILLANCE,
LORD AKAE... I INTEND
TO USE MY AUTHORITY
TO CUT OFF FOOD
SUPPLIES TO THEM!

ISN'T THAT
GOING A BIT
TOO FAR, LORD
HATAYASHU?

IT'S FOR THE
SAKE OF PEACE
IN THE CAPITAL
HERE AT OMI ..
HEH HEH...





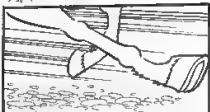
STOP!
HOLD
UP!



WAIT!!

WAIT
UP!

LORD INUGAMI!



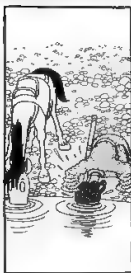
I'VE GOT
SOME
FUHO!

...AND
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH THAT
MEANS "BAD
NEWS!"

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT,
NUTARI?

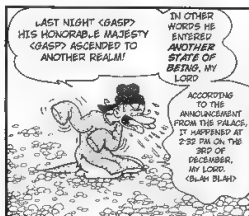


SOME
WATER
FIRST!!



<GULP>
<GULP>
<HACK>
<GAG>

YOU
NEVER
CHANGE,
DO
YOU,
NUTARI!





THAT'S RIGHT, SIR, AND
ACCORDING TO THIS
PROCLAMATION IT'S DUE TO
THE MERCY OF THE YOUNG
PRINCE OOHOO, WHO RULES
THROUGH A REGENT!



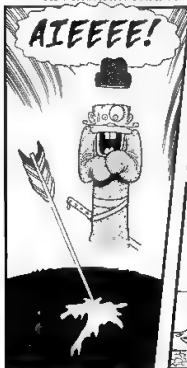
SIGN: COMPLETELY INNOCENT

IT'S
OBVIOUSLY
DUE TO
PRINCE OAHU,
WHO'S
ENTERED THE
PRIESTHOOD
BUT MUST BE
WORKING
BEHIND THE
SCENES FOR
YOU. CLEAR
AS DAY, I'D
SAY, SIR...

**T
H
U
D**



AIEEEEE!

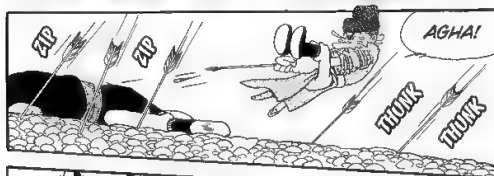


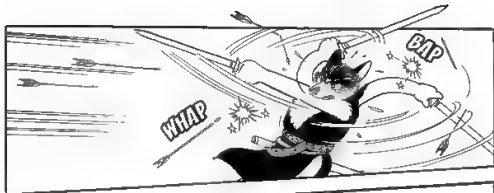
NUTARI...
HELP...ME...
PULL THE...
ARROW...OUT OF
MY BACK...

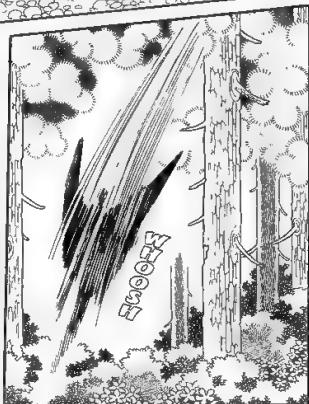
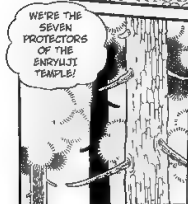
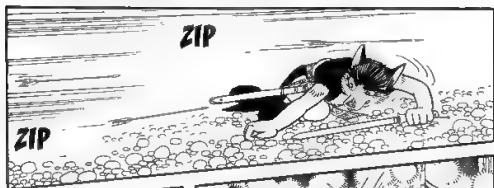
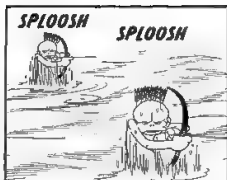


H...
HURRY...
GIVE IT
A...GOOD,
STRONG
PULL...











WHA
HA
HA

MY NAME'S
DETSDAN—
MOON
WARRIOR!



I'M
DODAN—
EARTH
WARRIOR!



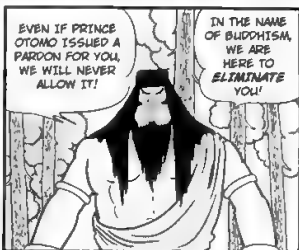
NICHIDAN—
SUN
WARRIOR!

KADAN—
FIRE!

MOKUDAN—
WOOD!

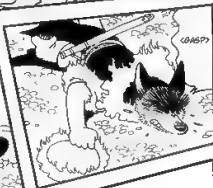
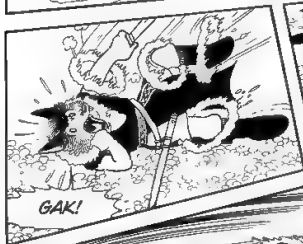


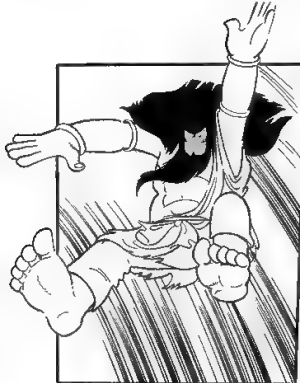
AND THE TWO
BEHIND YOU ARE
SLIDAN AND
KINDAN—WATER
AND GOLD!



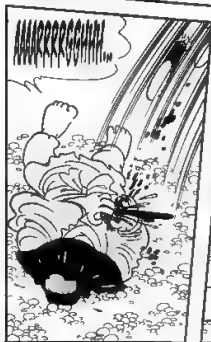
EVEN IF PRINCE
OTOMO ISSUED A
PARDON FOR YOU,
WE WILL NEVER
ALLOW IT!

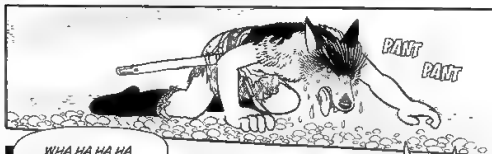
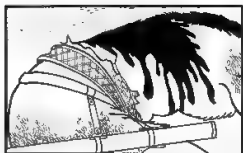
IN THE NAME
OF BUDDHISM,
WE ARE
HERE TO
ELIMINATE
YOU!



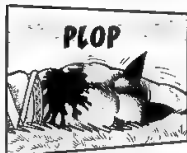










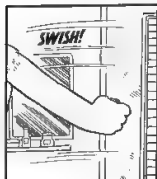






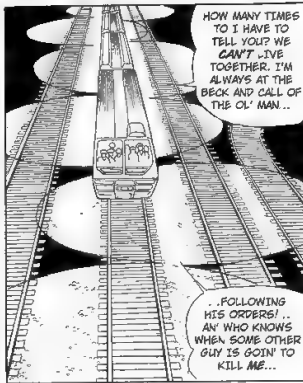




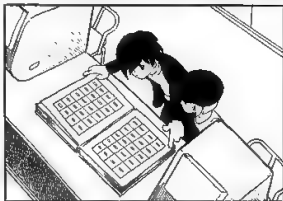






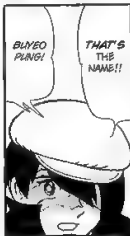
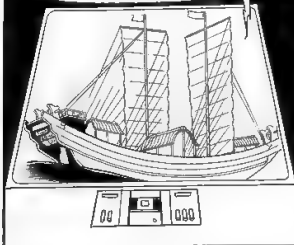


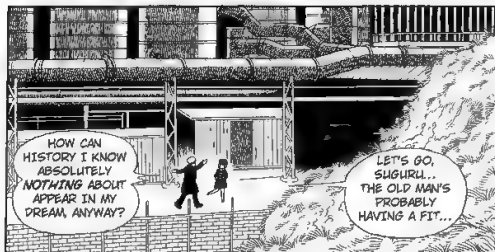
...FOLLOWING HIS ORDERS! .. AN' WHO KNOWS WHEN SOME OTHER GUY IS GOIN' TO KILL ME...

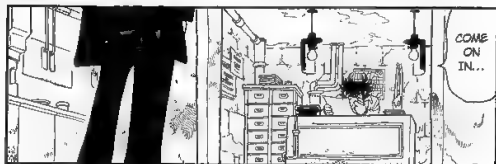
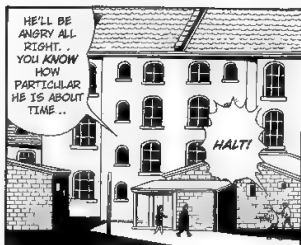


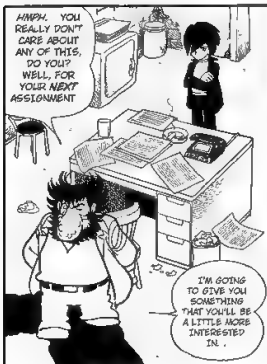
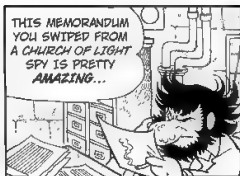


BETWEEN THE YEARS 661 AND 663, JAPAN SENT TROOPS TO SUPPORT PRINCE BUYEO PUNG OF THE BAEKJE KINGDOM ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. DUE TO INTERNAL DISARRAY AND ACCIDENTS, JAPANESE FORCES WERE ROUNDLY DEFEATED.



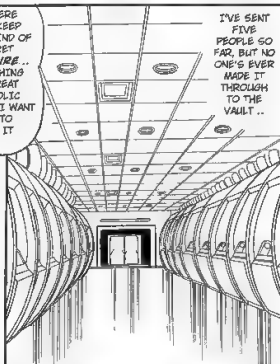




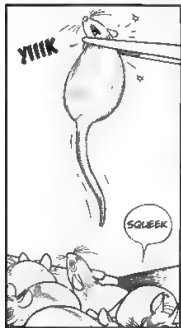
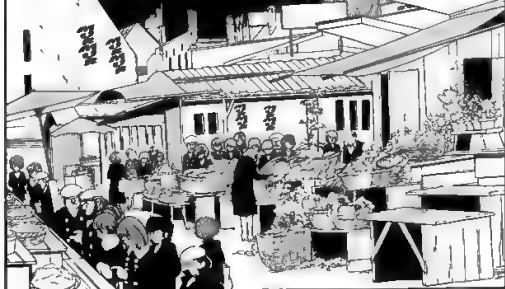


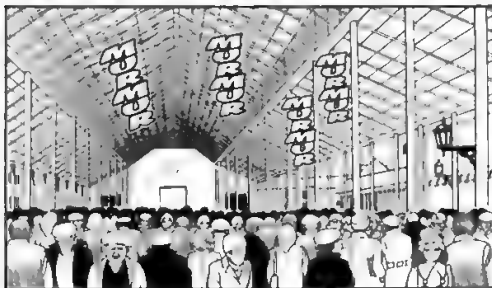
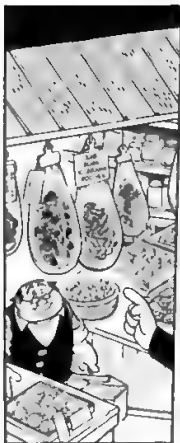


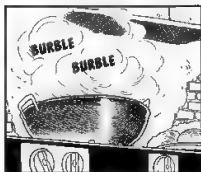
... WHERE THEY KEEP SOME KIND OF SECRET TREASURE... SOMETHING OF GREAT SYMBOLIC VALUE. I WANT YOU TO STEAL IT

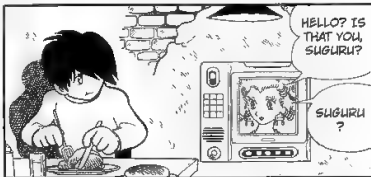
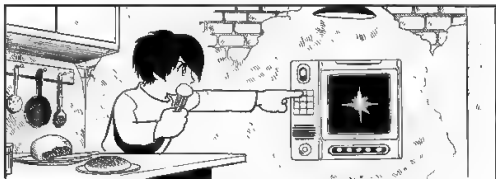


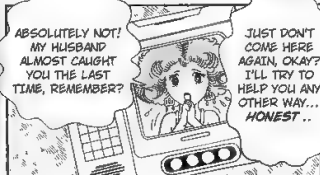
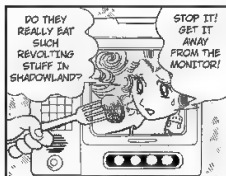
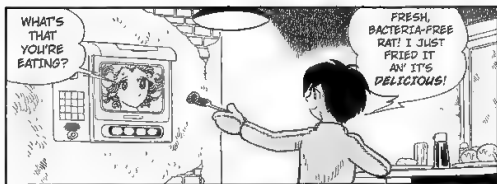


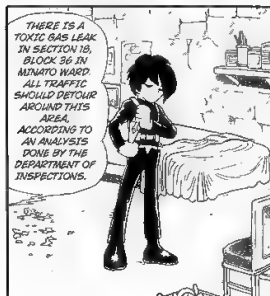
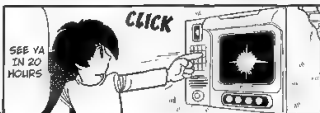
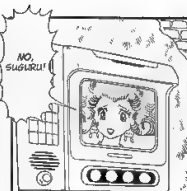


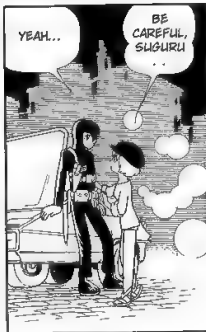
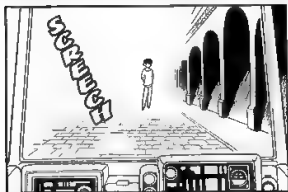
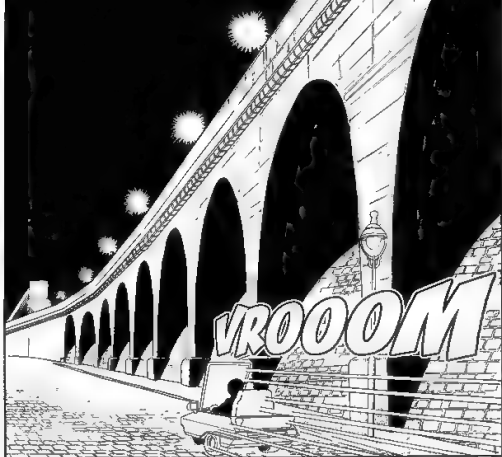




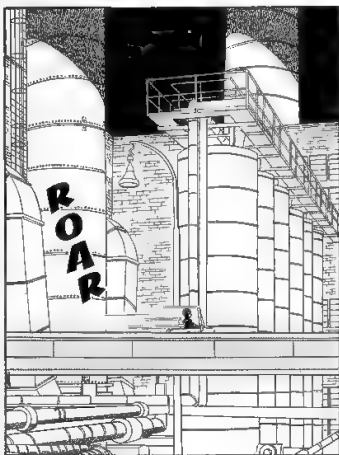
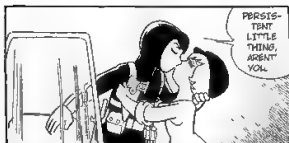


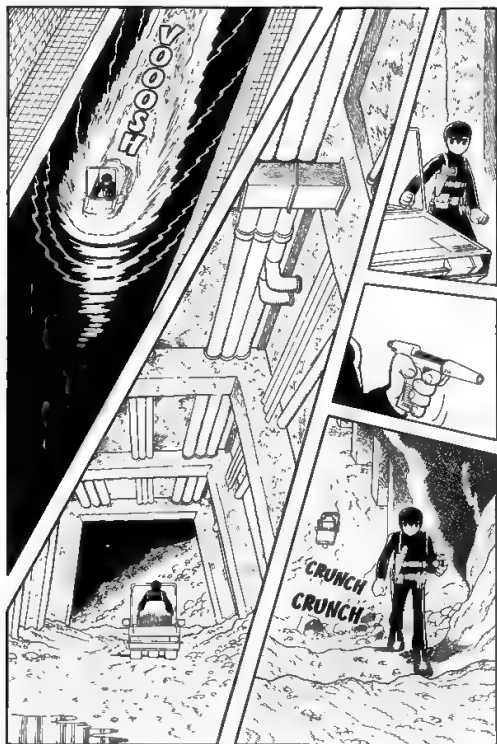


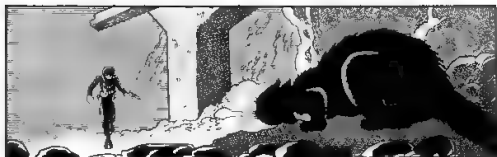












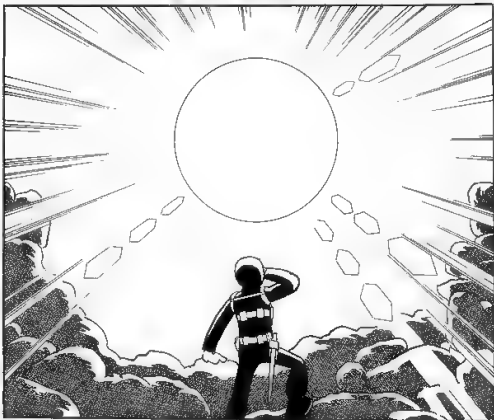
FOOLISH INTRUDER...
HE PROBABLY DIDN'T
KNOW THIS PLACE
IS FULL OF FERAL
CATS. AN' THEY'RE
WORSE THAN
WOLVES.

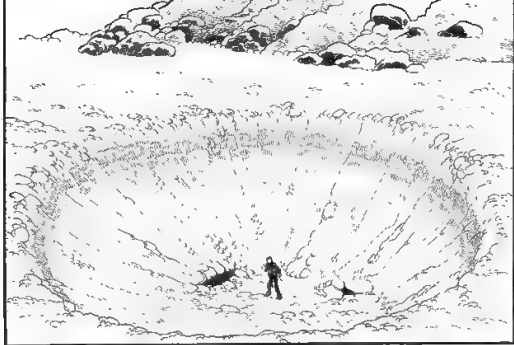


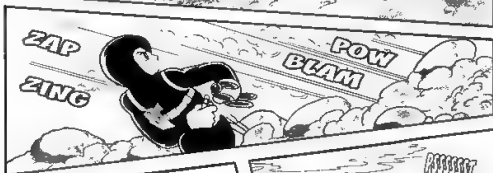
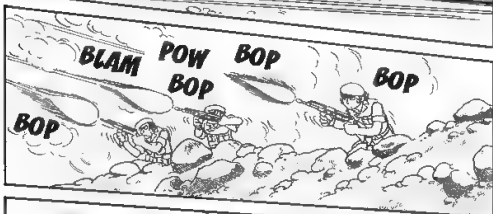
THERE'S
LIGHT! I MUST
BE CLOSE TO
THE BORDER
WITH THE LIGHT
WORLD

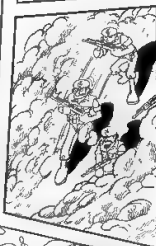


UGH...









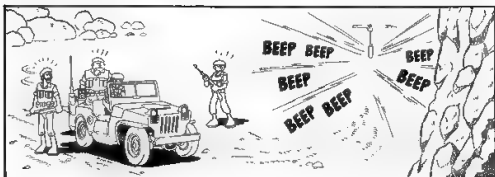
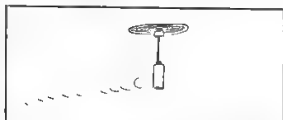
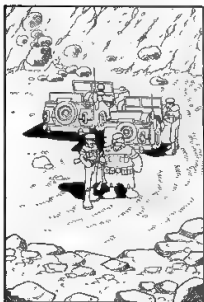


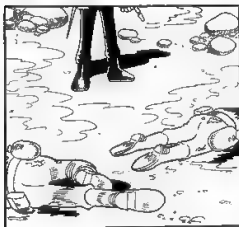
ZUBOOOOOON!



HEH
HEH...





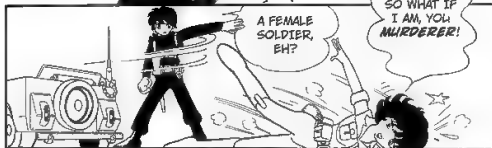




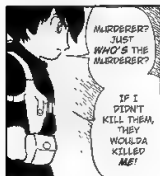
WHAT?! A
WOMAN?!



SO WHAT IF
I AM, YOU
MURDERER!



A FEMALE
SOLDIER,
EH?



MURDERER?
JUST
WHO'S THE
MURDERER?

IF I
DIDN'T
KILL THEM,
THEY
WOULDA
KILLED
ME!



SO LONG..
SORRY I GOTTA
DO THIS..



WELL?
HURRY UP
AND GET
IT OVER
WITH!



JUST
SHOOT
ME, YOU
MONSTER...

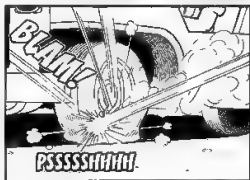
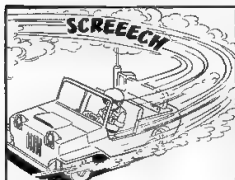
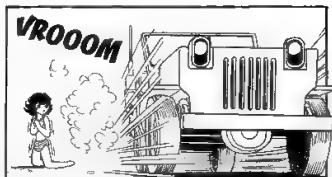
HOW
OLD ARE
YOU,
ANYWAY?

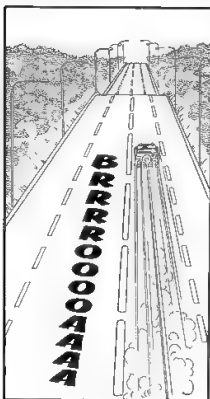
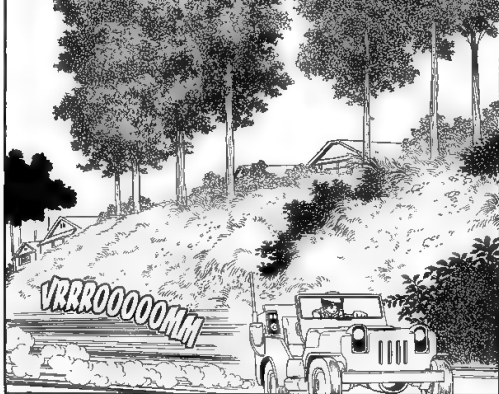


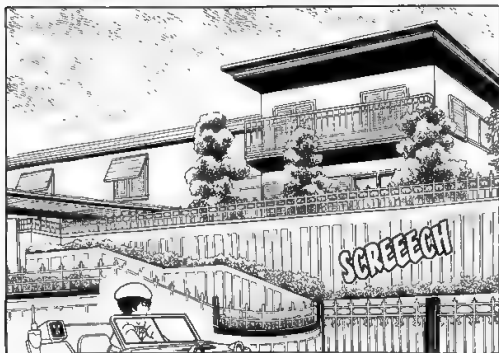
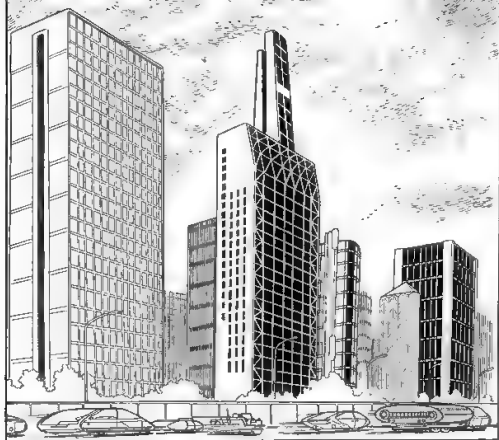
I..I'M
SEVEN-
TEEN...

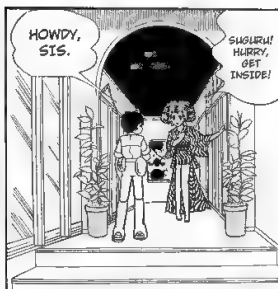
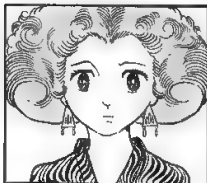
THEN I
WON'T KILL
YOU..

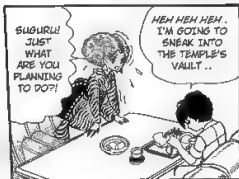
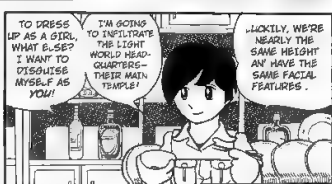


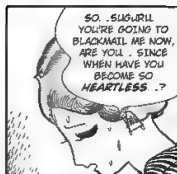












I WAS SENT
STRAIGHT TO
SHADOW LAND,
NO QUESTIONS
ASKED.

JUST IMAGINE A
CROSS BETWEEN
THE UNDERGROUND
MALLS AND THE
HUGE SEWER
SYSTEM THAT
EXTENDS ALL THE
WAY FROM TOKYO
TO YOKOHAMA...

YOU NEVER
SEE THE SUN.
IT'S A DUSKY
WORLD, WITH
AIR FILLED
WITH GRIT AND
GRIME WE ALL
LIVE LIKE
RATS DOWN
THERE!

YOU DON'T
EVEN KNOW
WHAT KIND
OF WORLD
SHADOW
LAND IS, DO
YOU SIS?

I DO KNOW ALL
ABOUT THAT,
SUGURU.
BUT THERE WAS
NOTHING I COULD
DO ABOUT IT

WELL, I'M
GOING TO
MAKE SURE
THAT YOU
MAKE UP FOR
IT AND PAY
ME BACK IN
SPADES!!

OH, NO!
MY
HUSBAND'S
HOME!



**HURRY!
HIDE IN
THE
CELLAR!**

**DARLING!
YOU'RE
HOME
EARLY!**



**HMM...
IT LOOKS
LIKE
YOU'VE HAD
COMPANY
...**

**COMPANY...?
OH.. YES...
AN OLD
CLASSMATE...
WE JUST HAD
SOME LUNCH
TOGETHER...**

**THERE'S BEEN
A REVISION IN THE
PROPAGANDA ACT. DEAR,
AND FIVE OF THE CHURCH
FATHER'S'LL BE COMING
HERE FOR DISCUSSIONS .
THESE ARE SUPER
IMPORTANT PEOPLE,
SO I NEED YOU TO HELP
HOST THEM .**

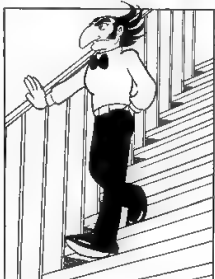
**OF
COURSE,
DARLING.**

UH, OH.

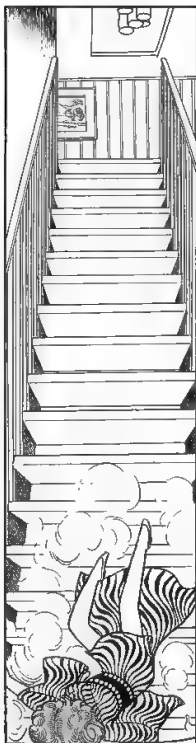
**HE'S ON
THE STEPS
RIGHT
ABOVE ME!**



THERE'S BEEN SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME EVER SINCE I WAS BORN. IT'S PROBABLY ALSO WHY I KEEP HAVING THESE STRANGE VISIONS.







MY GOD!
WHAT
HAPPENED,
DEAR? DID
YOU TRIP?



WHEN...

I...I'LL
GO GET
YOU
HELP...





HELLO?
HELLO?
IS THIS
CENTRAL
HOSPITAL?

LISTEN, MY WIFE
TRIPPED AND FELL
DOWN THE STAIRS!!
SHE'S BADLY
INJURED! I'LL BRING
HER TO THE HOSPITAL,
BUT I NEED SOMEONE
TO LOOK AT HER
RIGHT AWAY!

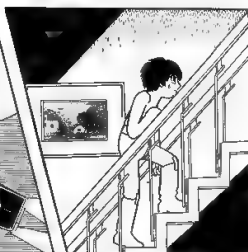


HELLO? NAMBU HERE
IS THIS THE PROPAGANDA
DEPARTMENT? LISTEN, MY
WIFE'S HAD AN ACCIDENT
SO I'LL HAVE TO CALL OFF
TONIGHT'S MEETING!

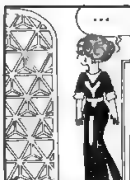
SIS...
YOU THREW
YOURSELF DOWN
THE STAIRS
JUST TO SAVE
ME, DIDN'T
YOU... I OWE
YOU ONE...



I CAN'T BELIEVE
IT. ON THE ONE
DAY SOMETHING LIKE
THIS HAPPENS, ALL
THE SERVANTS JUST
HAPPEN TO BE AWAY
ON HOLIDAY ..



NOW THAT HE'S
GONE, IT'S TIME
TO PUT MY PLAN
INTO ACTION.



EXCUSE
ME, MADAM,
FOR THE
SUDDEN
VISIT ..

I'M ISAHARA
FROM THE
PROPAGANDA
DEPARTMENT .
I'VE COME TO
SEE YOUR
HUSBAND



YOU **ARE**
THERE, AREN'T
YOU MA'AM?

WE SAW YOU
THROUGH THE
WINDOW...



AH.
THANK
YOU



I'M SORRY,
YOU JUST
MISSED MY
HUSBAND...

IS THAT SO?
AND IF THAT'S
THE CASE,
WHO'S
SPORTS CAR
IS THAT
OUTSIDE?

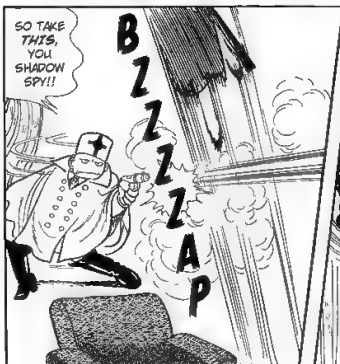
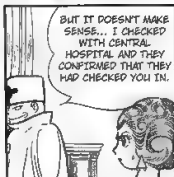
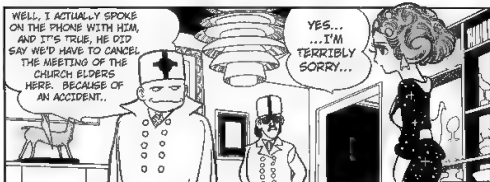


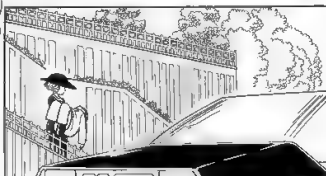
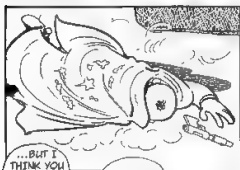
HE.. HE SAID
A FRIEND OF
HIS FELL
DOWN SOME
STAIRS AND
WAS BADLY
HURT...

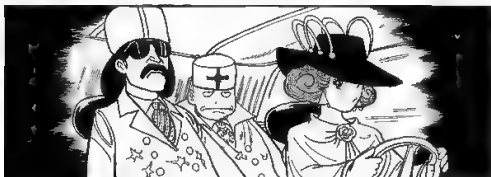
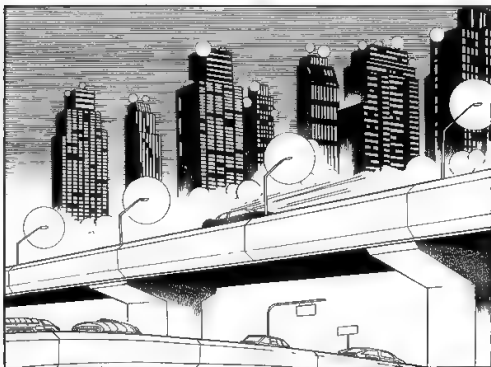
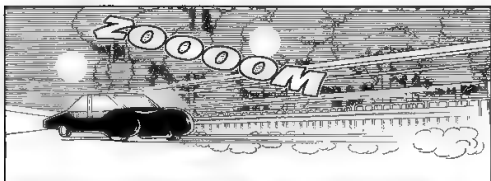
WOULD YOU
HAPPEN TO
KNOW WHERE
HE WENT?

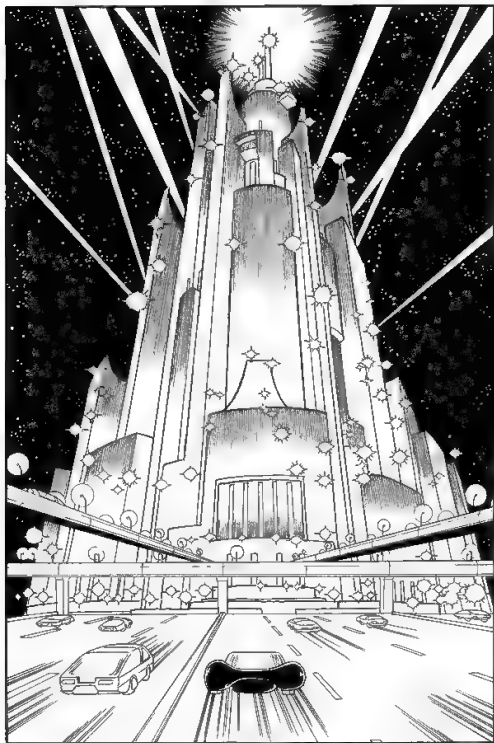
IS
THAT
SO...

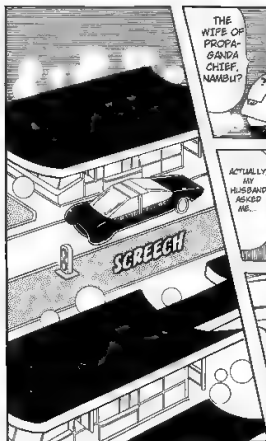
SO HE
WENT TO
SEE HIM











THE
WIFE OF
PROPA-
GANDA
CHIEF,
NAMBU?

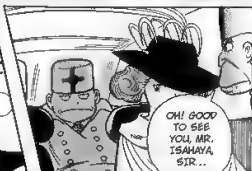


SORRY, BUT
YOUR HUSBAND
LEFT QUITE A
WHILE AGO,
MA'AM...

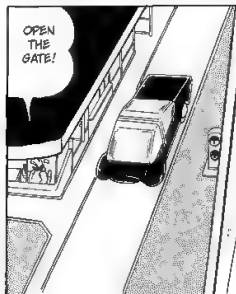
ACTUALLY,
MY
HUSBAND
ASKED
MR...



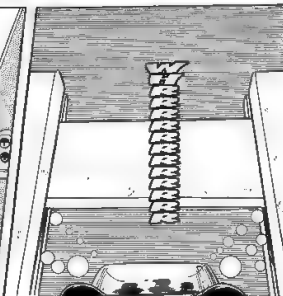
TO GIVE
SOME OF
HIS CO-
WORKERS A
RIDE BACK
HERE...

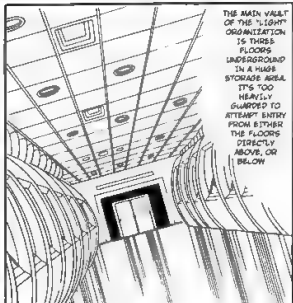
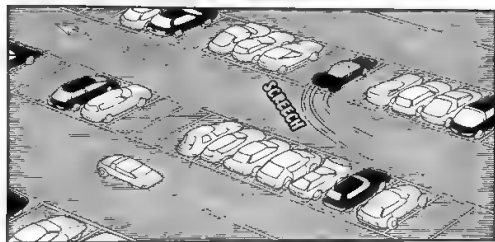
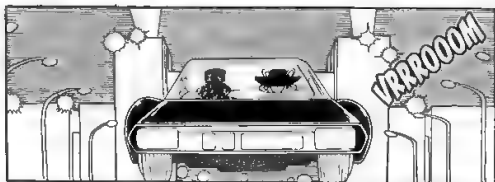


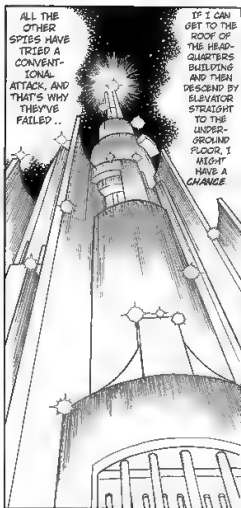
OH! GOOD
TO SEE
YOU, MR.
ISAHAYA,
SIR...



OPEN
THE
GATE!





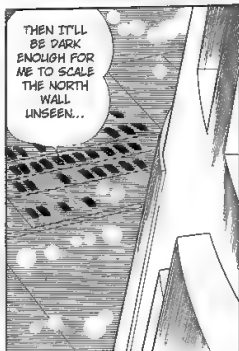


ALL THE
OTHER
SPIES HAVE
TRIED A
CONVENT-
IONAL
ATTACK, AND
THAT'S WHY
THEY'VE
FAILED ..

IF I CAN
GET TO THE
ROOF OF THE
HEAD-
QUARTERS
BUILDING AND THEN
DESCEND BY
ELEVATOR
STRAIGHT
TO THE
UNDER-
GROUND
FLOOR, I
MIGHT
HAVE A
CHANCE



I'VE GOTTA
WAIT UNTIL
2:00AM, WHEN
THE LIGHTING
ON THE
BUILDING'S
REDUCED
TWENTY
PERCENT .



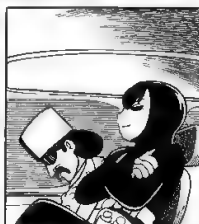
THEN IT'LL
BE DARK
ENOUGH FOR
ME TO SCALE
THE NORTH
WALL
UNSEEN..

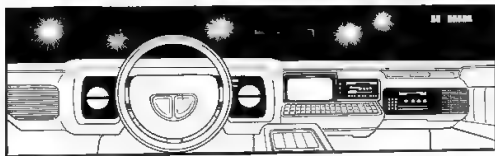
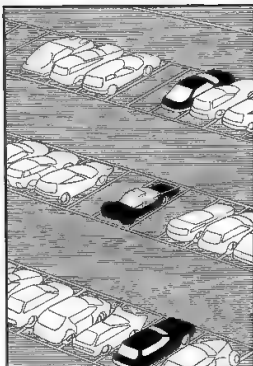
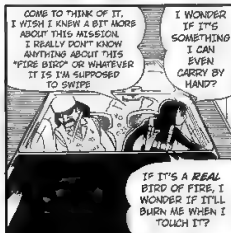


SO I'LL
JUST
TAKE A
NAP 'TIL
2:00AM.



MAYBE YOU
SHOULD GET
SOME SHUT
EYE, TOO,
PAL.







WOW .. IT'S A
MINI SOUND
CASSETTE.

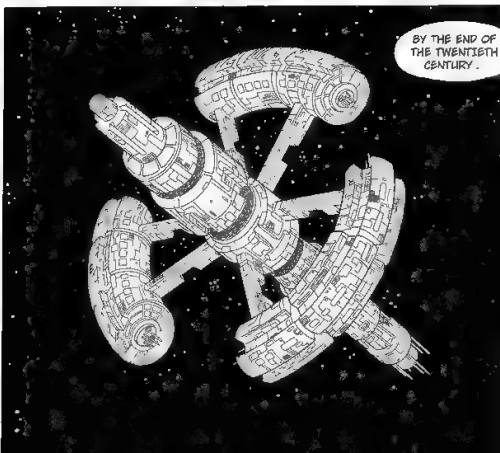
SOMEONE
MUST'VE
PUT IT
IN MY
UTILITY
BELT. .



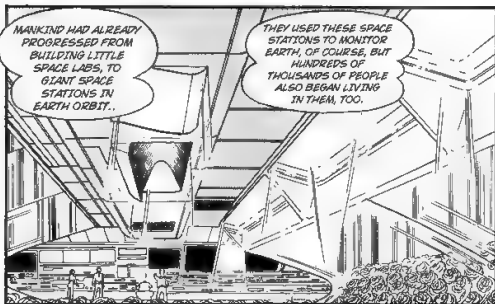
SUGURU BANDO!
DON'T BE
SURPRISED. .
YOU DO RECOGNIZE MY
VOICE, DON'T YOU?
THERE'S SOMETHING
I NEED TO TELL YOU
BEFORE YOU START
YOUR MISSION, SO
I RECORDED A
SOUND CASSETTE
FOR YOU. .

YIKES!
IT'S THE
OLD MAN!

THERE ARE
SOME THINGS
YOU NEED
TO KNOW
ABOUT THE
BIRD OF
FIRE...

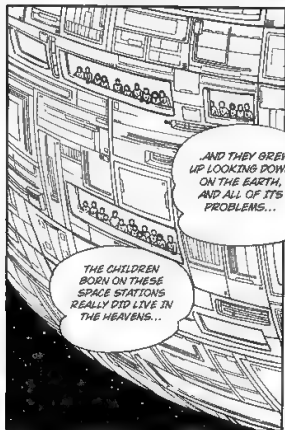


BY THE END OF
THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY. .



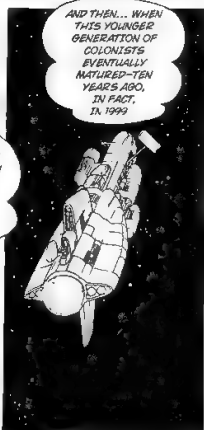
MANKIND HAD ALREADY
PROGRESSED FROM
BUILDING LITTLE
SPACE LABS, TO
GIANT SPACE
STATIONS IN
EARTH ORBIT..

THEY USED THESE SPACE
STATIONS TO MONITOR
EARTH, OF COURSE, BUT
HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE
ALSO BEGAN LIVING
IN THEM, TOO.



..AND THEY GREW
UP LOOKING DOWN
ON THE EARTH,
AND ALL OF ITS
PROBLEMS...

THE CHILDREN
BORN ON THESE
SPACE STATIONS
REALLY DID LIVE IN
THE HEAVENS...



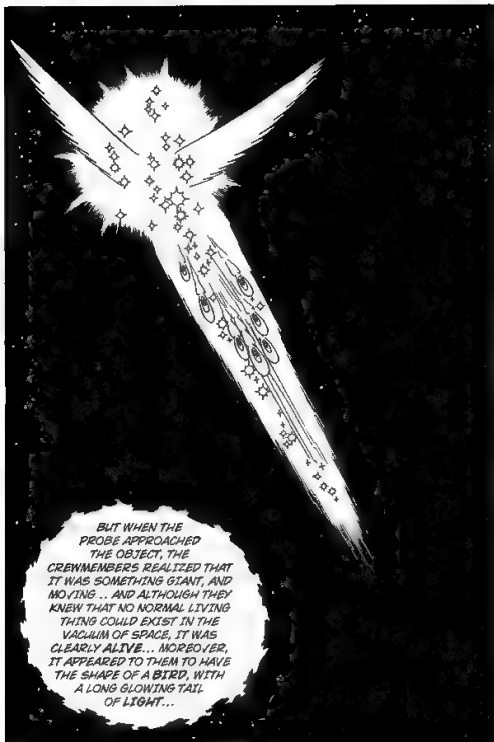
AND THEN... WHEN
THIS YOUNGER
GENERATION OF
COLONISTS
EVENTUALLY
MATURED—TEN
YEARS AGO,
IN FACT,
IN 1999

...A MANNED
INTER-
PLANETARY
PROBE WAS
SENT TO
VENUS...

IT WAS A LONG
VOYAGE, AND THERE
WERE ONLY FIVE
CREW MEMBERS ON
BOARD THE PROBE,
BUT AMONG THEM
WAS A YOUNG
ENGINEER NAMED
OTOMO

AND ONE DAY OTOMO
SUDDENLY SPOTTED
A MYSTERIOUS,
GLOWING OBJECT IN
THE SAME GENERAL
PATH AS VENUS'
ORBIT AROUND
THE SUN.

AT FIRST HE
THOUGHT THAT
IT WAS A
COMET...

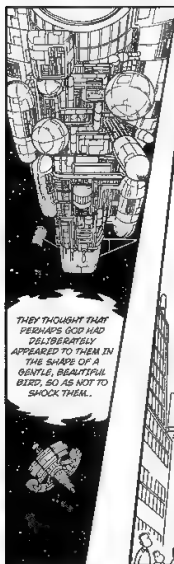


BUT WHEN THE
PROBE APPROACHED
THE OBJECT, THE
CREWMEMBERS REALIZED THAT
IT WAS SOMETHING GIANT, AND
MOVING... AND ALTHOUGH THEY
KNEW THAT NO NORMAL LIVING
THING COULD EXIST IN THE
VACUUM OF SPACE, IT WAS
CLEARLY ALIVE... MOREOVER,
IT APPEARED TO THEM TO HAVE
THE SHAPE OF A BIRD, WITH
A LONG GLOWING TAIL
OF LIGHT...

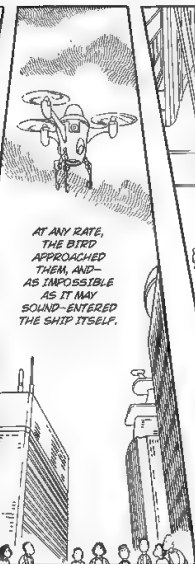


WHAT THEY WITNESSED
APPEARED TO THEM TO BE
ALMOST GOD-LIKE..

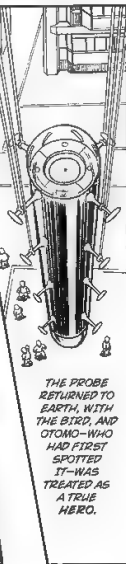
.. TO BE SOMEHOW
LINKED TO THE
CREATION OF THE
UNIVERSE ITSELF



THEY THOUGHT THAT
PERHAPS GOD HAD
DELIBERATELY
APPEARED TO THEM IN
THE SHAPE OF A
GENTLE, BEAUTIFUL
BIRD, SO AS NOT TO
SHOCK THEM..



AT ANY RATE,
THE BIRD
APPROACHED
THEM, AND—
AS IMPOSSIBLE
AS IT MAY
SOUND—ENTERED
THE SHIP ITSELF.

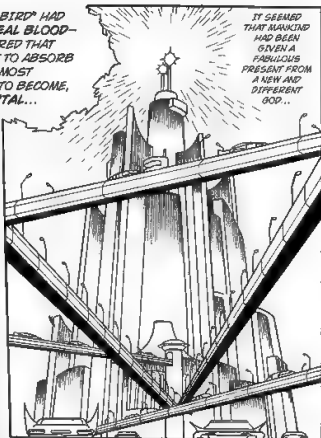


THE PROBE
RETURNED TO
EARTH, WITH
THE BIRD, AND
OTOMO—WHO
HAD FIRST
SPOTTED
IT—WAS
TREATED AS
A TRUE
HERO.

AMAZINGLY, THE "FIRE BIRD" HAD
BLOOD IN ITS VEINS—REAL BLOOD—
AND OTOMO DISCOVERED THAT
DRINKING IT WAS A WAY TO ABSORB
THE UNIVERSE'S MOST
FUNDAMENTAL ENERGY—TO BECOME,
IN EFFECT, IMMORTAL...

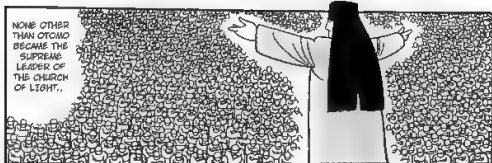


IT SEEMED
THAT MANKIND
HAD BEEN
GIVEN A
FABULOUS
PRESENT FROM
A NEW AND
DIFFERENT
GOD...



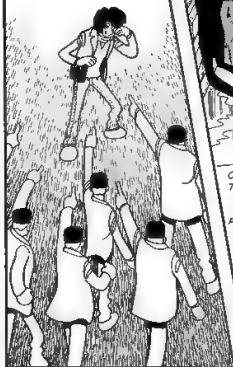
A RELIGIOUS
ORGANIZATION EVEN
SPRANG UP TO
WORSHIP THE BIRD,
AND IT WAS CALLED
THE CHURCH OF
LIGHT ..

NONE OTHER
THAN OTOMO
BECAME THE
SUPREME
LEADER OF
THE CHURCH
OF LIGHT..

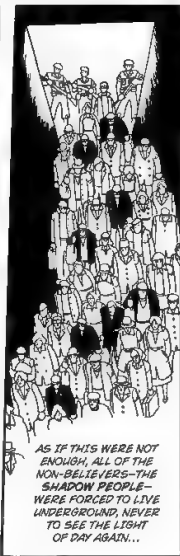




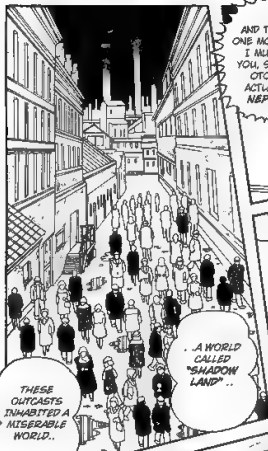
THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN THIS NEW FAITH BECAME MEMBERS. THOSE WHO DID NOT WERE TREATED AS OUTCASTS, AND REFERRED TO AS MEMBERS OF A "SHADOW" WORLD...



ON ORDER OF THE "CHURCH OF LIGHT" THEY WERE PERSECUTED, AND BANISHED FROM REGULAR SOCIETY.



AS IF THIS WERE NOT ENOUGH, ALL OF THE NON-BELIEVERS—THE SHADOW PEOPLE—WERE FORCED TO LIVE UNDERGROUND, NEVER TO SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY AGAIN...



AND THERE IS
ONE MORE THING
I MUST TELL
YOU, SUGURU...
OTOMO IS
ACTUALLY MY
NEPHEW...



AFTER
BANISHING
ME, HE
DECLARED
HIMSELF A
"LIVING
GOD"...



A GOD?!
HE CALLED
HIMSELF
A GOD?!



I'M JUST
SPECULATING, OF
COURSE, BUT BY THEN
OTOMO MAY HAVE
ALREADY DRUNK THE
FIREBIRD'S BLOOD
AND ATTAINED
IMMORTALITY...

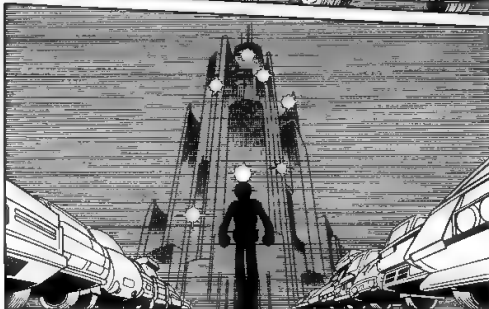
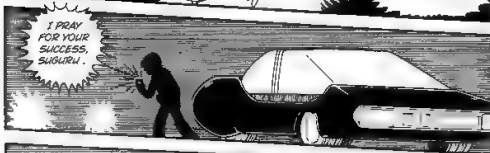
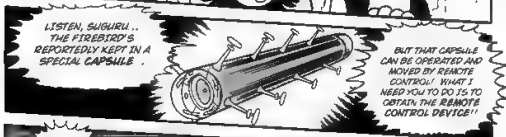


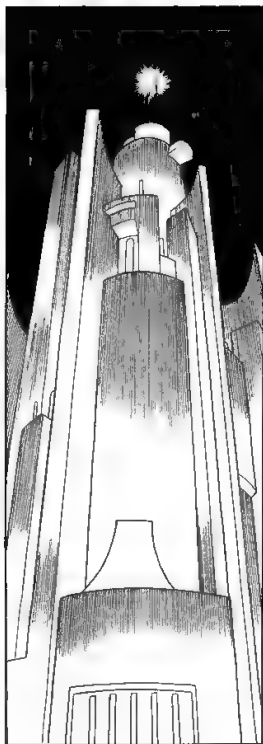
B...BUT
ORDINARY
PEOPLE CAN'T
BE GODS!

TH...
THAT'S
RIDI-
CULOUS!



HE MAY
ACTUALLY
BELIEVE
THAT HE HAS
BECOME A
GOD...







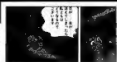
TO BE CONTINUED IN PHOENIX VOLUME 11: SUN PART 2

A Journey through Time and Space: An Overview of the Complete *Phoenix* Saga

The complete *Phoenix* saga is a story about mankind that features a historical-narrative structure unlike anything that has come before it. The first volume depicts the dawn of civilization. The second volume jumps to the far future. The setting for the third story shifts back to early history, and so on, back and forth, from past to future; the amplitude decreases as past and future converge to meet in the present.

Dawn (1967) 240-270 A.D.

The era of Queen Himiko of the Yamatai Koku. The work quotes from the accounts of the *Gishwa-jinden*. Also uses accounts from the legend of *Jinnu Tousei*.



The scene is the Amano-Iwato myth where Himiko

compares herself to Amaterasu-Ootomikami and a solar eclipse occurs.

Yamato (1968-69) 320-350 A.D.

Based on the legend of Yamato-takeru-no-mikoto. The dates above were inferred from account of Old Man Takeru, and from information in *Dawn*.



Disguised as a woman, Prince Yamato-Ogura approaches the Chieftain of the Kurozoe and stabs him. As told in the *Kuu* myth, the prince gets the name "Takeru" from his opponent right before he dies.

Karma (Hou-ou) (1969-70) 720-752 A.D.

The complicated drama of the spirit of two Buddhist sculptors. Set in the *Kara* Period (710-794) during the national enterprise of the construction of the Great Buddha. Here, the Hou-ou (a Chinese myth) is the Phoenix.



Manemaru, who has been ordered by the authorities to be in charge of the construction and design of the Great Buddha, is shocked when the statue shows tears. The workers become frightened, and the bizarre phenomenon halts construction.

Robe of Feathers (1971) 937-941 A.D.



The spirit of a fisherman is bewitched by the beauty of the woman and he hides her clothes...

A sci-fi version of the Hagoromo Legend of Miho no Matsubara in Enshu (modern day Shizuoka). Set during Taira no Masakado's rebellion which occurred during the Heian Period (898-1185).

The spirit of a woman swimming in the ocean is captured by the beauty of the white sand and green pine.

Civil War (1978-80) 1172-1185 A.D.

The time of the Genpei Kassen (War between the Taira and the Genji) after the fall of the Heishi (Taira Clan). Using the *Honjo Monogatari* and *Gikeiki* as a backdrop, this story depicts "combat" as the fate of living things.

Kiso Yoshiyuki defeats the Heishi and takes control of the capital. He cuts down the famous monk Myoun. He came to the capital because he is after the Phoenix.



Strange Beings (1981) 1468-1498 A.D.

The Sengoku Period (1462-1558). Sakonnoyuki, the heir of General Yagi Iemasa, cuts down the nun, Yobukuni, who seems to be 800 years old. But she doesn't realize the true relationship between herself and the nun.

The banner bearer is saying that "now" is the beginning of the Sengoku Wars and they are in the middle of the Onin Rebellion. In other words, they are in a time before Sakonnoyuki was born!



Sun (1986-88) 663-672 A.D.

The story begins after the defeat of the Japan-Kudara alliance at Hatakesuine and Japan's withdrawal from the Korean peninsula, and ends with the struggle for the imperial throne during the Jimshin Rebellion.



Emperor Kobaun, formerly called Otomo no Miko, is the cousin of Takachi no Miko, who is the son of Oama no Miko.

PAST

FUTURE

Future (1967-68) 3404 A.D.-infinity

The end of the future. Mankind is in decline and has become very conservative. The earth is run down and faces devastation. Eventually a nuclear war breaks out causing the end of everything.

The Yamato Centost Main Building Megopolis. Yamato is one of the five remaining underground cities of mankind.



Universe (1969) 2577 A.D.

In Orion, a sub-light speed rocket heading towards Earth crashes into a meteorite. The ship becomes unable to fly and four people manage to escape, including Saruta and Nana.



Each of the passengers escapes in an individual escape pod. However, the pods only have enough food for half a year and enough air for a year and a half. Possibilities of survival are...

Resurrection (1970-71) 2482-3344 A.D.

In the year 3344, Prof. Sureta lands on the moon. He meets and acquires Robita in his final form. Spanning 860 years, the end of this episode goes beyond *Universe* and close to the beginning of *Future*.

Robita and this rocket also make appearances in *Future*, where Robita stops Rock and then gets shot by him.



Nostalgia (1976-78) Indeterminate (approx. 25th century)

A Japanese woman named Romy establishes a civilization and history for the formerly uninhabited planet, Eden-17. Her husband dies an unnatural death, but the life she carries inside her...



The spaceship is headed for Eden-17. The shiny object in the foreground is its sun. The planet is surrounded by a swirling ring of space dust held there by gravity.

Life (1980) 2155-2170 A.D.

Human clones are being created, all for high ratings and a public-filling TV game show called *Clone Man Hunt*.

Animal clones were created for food. Human clones are created for a TV show—the cloning company president speaks as a sponsor. A terrifying plan for a TV show!



Sun (1986-88) 2008 A.D.

The "Light Tribe" acquires the Phoenix in space. However, they turn it into an icon and come to control society through religion. Non-believers are called "shadows" and are chased out to live underground.

The head temple of the "Light Tribe." A young shadow boy named Sugita endeavors to climb the great tower and steal the Phoenix.



ABOUT THIS EDITION OF PHOENIX: SUN, PART 1

The Jinshin Rebellion occurred in the year 672, just after the death of Emperor Tenji, and as most people are aware, there are various explanations for the uprising. Some say it began with the local nobles who felt mistreated and abused when the emperor moved the capital to Omi.

In this work, I offer my own, completely subjective explanation for what may have caused the greatest rebellion in ancient times, by asking what role Buddhism played in these events. One of the protagonists in the *Phoenix* series is a man named Sarutahiko (or Hiko Saruta). As Japanese readers know, Sarutahiko is also the name of a famous deity in Japanese mythology, and he is a home-grown deity, as opposed to ones later imported from abroad. In my story, I have depicted Saruta as a special spirit, who is a protector of the land, and he thus represents the ancient Japanese (Shinto-based) belief in local deities.

In ancient Japan, most people lived in small groups or villages and their faiths revolved around shamanism and sun worship. They were thus governed by very simple beliefs, in which people and their gods enjoyed a close relationship with one another. When Buddhism made its entry into this setting, it represented a very modern and different culture.

Buddhism came to Japan from abroad, barely one hundred years before the events depicted in this story. A variety of people, including the Korean Wani (or Wang'in), helped bring Buddhism to Japan, where it was initially linked to the ruling elite. The imperial and aristocratic families began to build temples and adopted Buddhism as their official religion.

Because the authorities were the ones promoting Buddhism in those days, it is easy to imagine the speed and effectiveness with which it must have spread. But it is equally easy to imagine

the resistance the indigenous Ainu and other animists must have put up in defending their belief in the local spirits of the land.

Religious conflicts present the most difficult problems for any culture. As a result, I am sure there must have been clans and villages that resisted the invasion of modern culture as represented by Buddhist teachings. And those clans and villages probably also rebelled against the authorities, who were using Buddhist teachings as a way to gain political advantage.

In *Phoenix*, Prince Oama (the future Emperor Tenmu) warns his brother, Emperor Tenji, that forbidding the worship of traditional shamanistic deities and protective family spirits will only create trouble with the non-aristocratic clans. But Emperor Tenji refuses to listen. As a result, ill feelings develop between the two, and the frustrations of the nobles eventually come to a head, with the emperor at the center of the explosion. In this volume of *Phoenix* I have incorporated my own, very subjective opinion: that the root cause of the Jinshin Rebellion was actually the social stresses created by the importation of Buddhism.

October 1986